

Norfolk Joint Museums Committee

Item No.

Report title:	Performance and Strategic update
Date of meeting:	27 October 2017
Responsible Chief Officer:	Tom McCabe – Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services
Strategic impact This report provides an update on performance against Norfolk Museums Service (NMS) Service Plans.	

Executive summary

This report provides an update on performance against Norfolk Museums Service (NMS) Service Plans.

Recommendations:

- To note progress regarding development of the Keep at Norwich Castle
- To note progress in terms of the programme and key Service Plan priorities for 2017/18
- To note progress in terms of developing the business plan for Arts Council England's new funding programme for 2018-22

1. Background

This report notes the performance of Norfolk Museums Service over the current financial year 2017/18 including the exhibitions and events programme across the 10 museums, the Service's award-winning learning programmes and the Service's work with groups including Looked After Children and foster families. The report also provides an update on all major projects including the Keep development at Norwich Castle.

2. Performance Summary

- 2.1 Total visits across the 10 museum sites up to the end of August 2017 were 217,601 compared to 190,282 for the equivalent five month period in 2016/17, a 14% increase. This positive position for the year-to-date is largely attributable to a very strong events and exhibitions programme across all 10 museums, including *Titanic: Honour & Glory* at Time and Tide and *Nelson & Norfolk* which gave the Service a record-breaking August for Norwich Castle (31,268 visits).
- 2.2 School visits across the 10 sites for the period up to the end of July 2017 were 17,555 compared to 17,406 for the equivalent four-month period 2016/17, a 1% increase on last year's record-breaking figures. As we usually report, this continuing trend of very high school numbers is very much at odds with the national picture of declining school visits to museums and is a tribute to the continuing hard-work of the learning teams across the County.
- 2.3 The Service is hoping to maintain visitor figures of c.400,000 across the 10 museums for 2017/18 and to keep school visits at the c.45,000 level.

3. Performance/Service Plan highlights

- 3.1 **‘Sixty Years On’: Norfolk Contemporary Art Society; exhibition at Norwich Castle**
An exhibition celebrating the impact of Norfolk Contemporary Art Society on Norwich Castle’s collections over the last six decades.

Exhibition in the Timothy Gurney Gallery – closed September 2017.
- 3.2 **Titanic: Honour and Glory; exhibition at Time and Tide Museum, Great Yarmouth**
Titanic has become the most famous ocean liner in the world: from her conception to her premature demise, the Titanic legend continues. With this exciting touring exhibition we explore this famous ship, her sister ships and their owners, the White Star Line, as well as revealing the local links of some of its passengers. Titanic: Honour & Glory is a must for all ages fascinated by this endlessly compelling story.

Exhibition ran 1 April – 24 September.

As a legacy from the exhibition, staff are exploring the option of a permanent presence for the Titanic story in the maritime galleries in Time and Tide Museum.
- 3.3 **Olive Edis: Pioneering Photographer; touring exhibition in North Norfolk**
Supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, an exhibition showing the work of Olive Edis, pioneering photographer and the world’s first female war photographer, is touring venues in North Norfolk.

Summer 2017.
- 3.4 **300 Year of Freemasonry; exhibition at the Museum of Norwich**

Exhibition exploring 300 Years of Freemasonry in Norwich.

Exhibition ran 9 May – 22 July.
- 3.5 **Nelson & Norfolk; exhibition at Norwich Castle**

Admiral Lord Nelson (1758 –1805) and his affection for his native county of Norfolk is the subject of the exhibition Nelson & Norfolk. The exhibition presents some of the most extraordinary and potent objects connected to Nelson, from his boyhood in Norfolk to his death at Trafalgar in 1805.
The centerpiece is the early French Tricolour - the monumental Ensign (or flag) of the French warship Le Génèreux, which took part in the Battle of the Nile in 1798. A British victory, the battle sealed Nelson's reputation as England’s greatest hero.

Exhibition runs 29 July – 1 October 2017
- 3.6 **Rembrandt: Lightening the Darkness; exhibition at Norwich Castle**

Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn (1606-1669) is one of the most revered artists of the European tradition. Rembrandt: Lightening the Darkness focuses specifically on one of the less well-known aspects of Rembrandt’s output,

namely his fascination with print-making

During his lifetime, Rembrandt was as famed for his etchings as for his paintings. In Britain, for example, he was far better known as a printmaker producing evocative Dutch landscapes, biblical scenes and sensitive portraits, including many introspective self-portraits.

Rembrandt produced 290 etchings during his life and in his hand the etching became a true work of art in its own right. To this day he is widely considered to be the most accomplished etcher of all time.

Rembrandt: Lightening the Darkness showcases Norwich Castle's extraordinary collection of 93 prints and 1 drawing by Rembrandt alongside select loans from the British Museum, National Galleries of Scotland, National Gallery, and Royal Collection.

Exhibition runs 21 October – 7 January 2018.

3.7 We Came Here to Conquer; exhibition in the Timothy Gurney Gallery, Norwich Castle

11 artists with connections to Norwich have created work in response to the historic print collection at Norwich Castle. Supported by Arts Council England, East Anglia Art Fund and Norwich University of the Arts.

Exhibition runs from the end of September 2017.

3.8 Shoes!; exhibition at Lynn Museum

Shoes can be expressive. Shoes can be special. Shoes can be status symbols. Shoes can be works of art. Shoes can be magical. Shoes can be good luck charms.

Shoes! explores changes in footwear from the 13th century to the present day. The display draws upon the Lynn Museum's collections of historic footwear with additional items from the Norfolk Museums Service costume and textile collections.

Exhibition runs 24 June 2017 - 9 June 2018.

3.9 Cecil Aldin: The Art of Black Beauty; exhibition at the Museum of Norwich

Explore a display of beautiful, Cecil Aldin watercolours, painted for the 1912 edition of Black Beauty - a text first printed in Norwich by Jarrolds & Sons 140 years ago. Don't miss the special trail and activities created to accompany this show.

Cecil Aldin: The Art of Black Beauty' has been created in partnership with Jarrold & Sons.

Exhibition runs from July 2017 until 25 November 2017.

4. Learning Programme highlights

- 4.1 The Learning Teams have secured two prestigious Sandford Awards for Excellence in Education. The two sites recognised were Norwich Castle and Gressenhall Farm & Workhouse. These national awards recognise the role which museums and heritage sites play in supporting the development of young people in a variety of ways.

The Judges' comments were very complimentary about both sites and included the following statements:

Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse Museum provides excellent teaching in a wonderful Heritage environment. With careful reference to all key stages of the National Curriculum, pupils learn about current issues while experiencing a step back into the history of Norfolk. Informal visitors can be thoroughly immersed in activities in the museum galleries and then explore the historic Farm and Gardens. Thoroughly recommended.

and

Norwich Castle is an impressive Heritage building of over 900 years old, it houses wonderful collections of History, Archaeology, Art and Natural History. The Learning Service provides excellent stimulating sessions for schools at all Key stages, informal visits are rewarded with a wealth of absorbing activities. A truly memorable visit.

- 4.2 On the 31st August, the Learning Team at Gressenhall hosted a day for families who use Virtual School Sensory Support services (VSSS) in Norfolk. NMS has been holding these days for pre-school families for the past few years but this year the decision was made to expand the event to include up to Year 4 children who use VSSS. This resulted in a significant increase in numbers from about 50 in previous years to 273 family members.

The event follows a similar format to the Service's Family Fun Day for foster and adoptive families. Museum staff facilitate a few accessible activities including Art Attack and washing, watering and cleaning around the farmhouse. The feedback from VSSS staff and visitors was uniformly excellent. Similarly to the Family Fun days, the opportunity that we give for families to meet in a safe and positive environment came up over and over again.

Matt Dunkley, Interim Director of Children's Services, kindly wrote to Jan Pitman and the Gressenhall team to congratulate them on the delivery of this successful event.

- 4.3 The following feedback was received from the Learning Team at Gressenhall following a recent visit by Churchill Park School from near King's Lynn:

Dear Ellie

I would like to thank you for a truly wonderful day out at Gressenhall Workhouse and Farm.

After speaking to the other teachers, we are all in agreement that as a school visit it is unsurpassed. The children who visited today have a range of complex and challenging needs and find accessing the community difficult but they all, without question, loved it. Each child found something wonderful to talk about on the bus home and one young man in particular (who finds writing extremely distressing and refuses most of the time) refused point blank to go home this evening until he had written independently "That trip was awesome"

The staff at Gressenhall are truly wonderful and so helpful. They had the students in the palm of their hands and they are extremely knowledgeable and patient.

There is no price that can be put on a community resource like Gressenhall and I know that my class will enjoy this visit all year by looking back at photographs and talking about it again and again.

I would appreciate this email being shared to all at Gressenhall and beyond.

Thank you

*Warm regards
Kelly Terrey*

5. Teaching Museum & Skills

5.1 The new Teaching Museum trainees are well into their 12 month placements and are involved in programmes across the County.

- Alanna Baker, Exhibition and Events, Time & Tide, Great Yarmouth
- Sam Belotti, Thetford and King's Lynn
- Andrew Bowen, Costume & Textile department, Norwich
- David Holgate-Carruthers, Museum of Norwich
- James Lumbard, Keep Project
- Phoebe Wingate, Learning Team, Eastern Area
- Nicoletta Foden-Hall, Events and Commercial, Norwich Castle

5.2 Following the submission of an application developed by Dr Robin Hanley and the Learning Teams in November 2016, NMS has been awarded £776,500 from the Heritage Lottery Fund for the 'Norfolk Journeys' project. The project seeks to empower young people to develop their own pathways into the County's heritage. This project forms part of the Heritage Lottery Fund's 'Kick the Dust' initiative, a new £10m grant programme which aims to transform how heritage organisations engage with young people.

As part of the bid process 17 young people aged 16-25 were recruited as Heritage ambassadors, they then advised the Heritage Lottery Fund on the projects they found to be most useful and appealing. Hannah Keddie, 22, Heritage Ambassador from East Anglia, said: "It has been an amazing experience learning how grants are awarded, and helping HLF to allocate £10m to projects involving more young people in heritage. I'm really pleased that Norfolk Journeys has won funding, as we found its plans to involve young people in museum work and provide them with archaeological experience especially appealing. Making Norfolk's heritage easier to access and participate in for more people my age is really important to me and the other ambassadors, and I'm looking forward to seeing how the project progresses in the future."

The next stage of the project will be the completion of an Activity Plan, which is due for submission by December. Subject to a Round 2 pass by HLF, project activity will start in April 2018 and run until March 2022 (4 years).

6. Marketing and PR

6.1 Marketing and PR activity moves from the highly successful *Nelson & Norfolk* exhibition to *Rembrandt: Lightening the Darkness* and other exhibitions across the County.

- 6.2 Norfolk Museums Service launched its new website in September. Many thanks go to the project team at Norfolk County Council, led by Fran Grimmer and sponsored by Ceri Sumner, Assistant Director (Community, Information & Learning). The new site, embedded within the NCC website, is enabled for mobile and tablets and features a huge range of new facilities including video. www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk
- 6.3 As previously reported, the Magritte painting from the Norwich collections, *La Condition Humaine*, featured on BBC East Inside Out on 31 January. The story of the hidden painting also made the list of the top 10 international art discoveries of 2016. Preparation is ongoing for a permanent display of this now internationally famous painting, along with several other key works from the contemporary art collections.
- 6.4 The loan of the Pentney Brooches from the British Museum to Lynn Museum was a great success, with significant interest in the exhibition which was extended to run until May 2017. The acquisition of a major work of art for Lynn Museum is currently underway and further details will be made available soon.

7. Partnerships

- 7.1 The Museums Service has completed the loan of the wing of the P10 aircraft which is now displayed in the ground-breaking Norwich International Aviation Academy. The wing, from the first steel-framed plane in the world, was made by Norwich manufacturing company, Boulton & Paul and was exhibited at the Paris Air Show in 1919. The Aviation Academy is now delivering its first full year of training.
- 7.2 Sarah Gore, Teaching Museum Manager, has taken on the role of Chair of the City of Sanctuary project which aims to support refugees in the City. This builds on the very successful work with Syrian refugees over the summer period.
- 7.3 Norfolk Museums Service supported Broadland DC and the Aylsham and District Team Ministry with the delivery of the exciting 12 Towers Project and planning is currently underway for a follow-up programme for 2018.
- 7.4 Norfolk Museums Service has supported a successful application to the Heritage Lottery Fund to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the first modern circus in Britain. Partners in the application include Museums Sheffield and Tyne & Wear Museums and Archives, along with local organisations including Seachange Arts in Great Yarmouth. The celebration will take place during the autumn of 2018.
- 7.5 The Museums Service worked very successfully in partnership with the Norwich Freeman to give free entry to both the Museum of Norwich at the Bridewell and Strangers' Hall over the summer period. The initiative, linked to a strong programme, saw a very significant uplift in visitor numbers. An evaluation exercise is underway.

8. Commercial Developments

- 8.1 A key element of the current Service Plan and of meeting the challenges of the budget reductions ahead is the successful delivery of the Service's commercial income targets. Key developments since the last meeting are listed below:
- 8.2 During 2016/17, over 540 ceremonies have been held within the Benefactors' Room at Norwich and bookings for 2017/18 are very strong. An increasing

number of weddings have been delivered at Strangers' Hall and Gressenhall and the Museums Service is working with the Registrar team on the 'Marry in Norfolk' campaign.

8.3 The Museums Service continues to work successfully with a tourism organisation UK Countryside Tours to develop tourism packages for the US alumni market, based on quintessential English experiences. The team at Gressenhall has helped to create an offer around the history of English agriculture focusing on leading figures like Jethro Tull and Charles Townshend.

8.4 External Services – the Museum's national-standard Design and Conservation teams continue to offer professional services commercially to other museums and heritage sites. Project work for a number of external clients is being delivered for the forthcoming financial year, including work for the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts (SCVA) and the National Trust.

The Design Team continue to secure an impressive range of external contracts, across the County and beyond.

For more details visit www.conserveanddisplay.co.uk

8.5 An increasing number of commercial bookings for Norwich Castle continue to be delivered, including major events and celebrations for local businesses. A verbal update on the latest figures will be given at the meeting.

8.6 Conclusion

The Service is on track to deliver its key priorities in terms of programmes and events, along with a balanced budget for 2017/18.

9. Strategic Developments

9.1 **Norwich Castle Keep.** An initial development grant of £462,400 is a major boost to the multi-million pound plan to transform Norwich Castle's iconic Keep into one of the region's premier heritage attractions. A further £8.7 million has been earmarked towards the project and a second application for the full grant will be made at a later date.

9.1.1 Along with the recreation of the 12th Century Royal Palace, the project will enable a unique form of partnership, displaying national treasures from the British Museum collections alongside exquisite artefacts from Norwich Castle's own medieval collection, in a new *British Museum Gallery of the Medieval Period*.

9.1.2 Following permission to start, which was obtained on 14 July 2016, the Project Team have officially entered the Development Phase of the project. The work being undertaken during this period will form the basis of the second-round application to the Heritage Lottery Fund, which is expected to be submitted in late 2017/early 2018.

9.1.3 The following key meetings have been held to date:

- The second Academic Advisory Board meeting was held on 16 September 2016
- The second Project Board meeting was held on 12 October 2016
- The second HLF Monitor/Mentor meeting was held on 21 October 2016

- The third Project Board meeting was held on 4 January 2017
- The fourth Project Board meeting was held on 8 May 2017
- The fifth Project Board meeting was held on 28 July 2017

- 9.1.4 Following a European tender process, Artelia Projects UK Ltd were appointed to provide project and cost management services for the Development and Delivery phases of the project in November 2016. The evaluation panel consisted of members of the NMS Senior Management Team and Norfolk County Council Corporate Property Team, and approval to appoint was granted by the Project Board. An inception meeting with the Project Team took place on 14 December 2016 and the contract officially commenced on 9 January 2017.
- 9.1.5 Following a European tender process, Hayley Sharpe Design were appointed to provide design support in April 2017. The evaluation panel consisted of members of the NMS Senior Management Team and Norfolk County Council's procurement team.
- 9.1.6 Regular communication is being held between curatorial and project teams at NMS and the British Museum in order to develop concepts for the British Museum Partnership Gallery of the Medieval Period within the Keep.
- 9.1.7 A consultation session was held on 5 September 2016 with The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, which resulted in favourable responses to the design proposals for the Castle Keep and entrance hall.
- 9.1.8 A drone survey of the exterior of the Keep was completed in March and further work is ongoing in terms of analysing the information from this and the digital metric survey.
- 9.1.9 The Architectural and Structural Engineering appointments were made in June 2017 following a European tender process. Fielden & Mawson LLP have been appointed as the Project Architects and Conisbee have been appointed as Structural Engineers.

9.2 Norfolk Museums Development Foundation (NMDF) & Fundraising

- 9.2.1 Delivery of the fundraising strategy via the Norfolk Museums Development Foundation continues to progress well.

A website for the Foundation has been created to give the charity a profile for potential supporters and grant giving bodies – <http://nmdf.org.uk/>

- 9.2.2 Current focus for the Foundation remains the Keep development project for which a large amount of preparatory research and advocacy work is being undertaken, along with the submission of applications to grant-giving trusts and foundations.
- 9.2.3 An application to the Garfield Weston Foundation for the support of the Keep development was successful in April with a grant of £500,000 towards the project being made.
- 9.2.4 The forthcoming Norwich Castle exhibition programme, including the Rembrandt exhibition in the autumn, are also being supported by fundraising through the Foundation.
- 9.2.5 The public fundraising programme for the Keep project went live in September.

The campaign is entitled 'Keep Giving and includes a range of ways to support the Project, such as Text Giving, Keep Giving merchandise and on-site promotion.

A new initiative, Adopt an Object, allows members of the public to adopt a museum object connected with Norwich Castle. For more details, visit www.adoptanobject.co.uk

9.3 Gressenhall Farm & Workhouse – Voices from the Workhouse project

- 9.3.1 The Voices from the Workhouse development project at Gressenhall, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and other key funders including DCMS Wolfson and Breckland DC, has now been successfully completed, with the main exhibition opened to the public in May 2016.
- 9.3.2 Learning and outreach work with local schools and community groups linked to the project continues.
- 9.3.3 The Gressenhall project team have been recognised for their hard work and dedication to delivering an exemplary project by Norfolk County Council in the form of an Outstanding Contribution Award (OSCA).
- 9.3.4 The final element of the capital works, the redeveloped Collections Gallery, was completed in May 2017 and is now open to the public. The new gallery will be used by a range of users, including young people's groups.

9.4 Arts Council England

- 9.4.1 NMS was successful in its application to be included in the Arts Council England's National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) family for the period 2018-22. NMS was awarded £4.812m for the four year period.

In addition to the NPO application, the Service also submitted a successful application to continue as one of the nine national providers of Museum Development services through SHARE Museums East (SHARE Museums East is now described as a Sector Support Organisation or SSO). NMS was awarded £1.745m for the four year period.

- 9.4.2 The Service now has to submit business plans for the period 2018-22 and this will be assessed during the coming months.

The East Contemporary Visual Arts Network (ECVAN), of which NMS is a leading member, has been successful with an application to Arts Council England's Ambition for Excellence strategic fund. Receiving a grant of £600,000 over three years will enable ECVAN to deliver a new project: New Geographies of the East.

New Geographies of the East is an ambitious programme that will deliver 10 major site-specific visual arts commissions, developed with and for communities in the East of England and with international partners from the Netherlands. The programme will be accompanied by an extensive community engagement programme and an artist and curator development initiative.

The project will develop new audiences for contemporary visual art whilst strengthening and deepening relationships between artists and curators in the

East of England and the Netherlands. Nine lead partners from ECVAN will collaborate with three partners in the Netherlands; The Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten, Casco: Office for Art, Design and Theory and If I Can't Dance, I Don't Want to be Part of Your Revolution. They will work alongside a host of additional local partners including Great Yarmouth Borough Council, Vivacity Peterborough and CPP Marketplace, Fenlands & Forest Heath and others.

The public are currently being encouraged to submit ideas for important, but less well-known places, which will be considered as locations for the artworks.

9.4.3 Norfolk Museums Service has been tasked with a national leadership responsibility for the Arts Council's Goal 4 Diversity and Skills. This has involved delivering a national conference and publicising case studies drawn from NMS's work and that of 5 other Major Partner Museums across England. NMS is also working with Kids in Museums, the national charity, to develop a new Takeover Day programme aimed at introducing children from diverse backgrounds to the idea of working in museums and the cultural sector.

9.4.4 The Museums Service received a very positive end of year report from the Arts Council with particular credit given to the Museum's progress embedding new income generation initiatives and activities, and its award-winning work with children and young people.

An artistic assessment of the *Nelson & Norfolk* exhibition was also undertaken by the Arts Council in September.

9.5 Deep History Coast Project

9.5.1 NMS curatorial staff continue to progress the *Deep History Coast* Project initiative.

9.5.2 Staff continue to work on the Deep History Coast (DHC) publication.

9.5.3 Work is continuing, together with Natural History Museum specialists, on a review and analysis of Norfolk's faunal collections from the Cromer Forest Bed. Dr David Waterhouse appeared on the Channel 4 documentary 'Walking Through Time', concerning Britain's lost land bridge. A DHC public 'Fossil Roadshow' event was delivered at Time & Tide Museum over the summer and behind the scenes tours as part of Heritage Open Weekends in September

9.5.4 NMS staff continue to work with North Norfolk District Council (NNDC) on the DHC Steering Committee in order to shape the direction of the project in North Norfolk. Specialist advice and support has also been provided to North Norfolk's developing DHC Coastal Community Team work, with further meetings scheduled.

9.5.5 The partnership application led by NNDC to the Government's Coastal Communities Fund (CCF) was unfortunately unsuccessful. However, the partnership have decided to seek new sources of funding with a continuing focus on Cromer Museum as a community hub for the project.

9.6 DCMS National Museums Review

9.6.1 The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has begun a National

Museums Review, the first such review in more than 15 years.

- 9.6.2 As part of the Review, the Museums Service received a visit in August from Neil Mendoza, Chair of the Review, Dr Simon Thurley and Kate Bellamy from the DCMS.
- 9.6.3 Jo Warr and Jamie Everitt attended roundtable meetings at DCMS in March.
- 9.6.4 The Museums Review is expected to be published in the autumn of 2017.
- 9.6.5 In parallel to the National Review, the Museums Association has created a Museums Taskforce to examine the state of the museums sector across the UK and produce a report by January 2018. NMS is represented on the Steering Group for this piece of work.

9.7 Health & Wellbeing

- 9.7.1 Following the Health & Wellbeing Conference held at Norwich Castle in May 2016, development work continues on a range of initiatives to support Norfolk residents including projects on the topic of mental health and early onset dementia. Many of these programmes are being delivered in partnership with NCC's Public Health services and third sector partners.

10. Museum Development across Norfolk

- 10.1 NMS continues to have a leadership role for the wider museums sector across the East of England. The Service is in receipt of a grant of £1.2m per annum from Arts Council England to provide professional support, advice and guidance to museums for the three year period 2015-18. The programme of support is delivered by SHARE Museums East.
- 10.2 SHARE Museums East continues to provide Accreditation advice to museums in the region with a dedicated email enquiries line and regular county group updates and briefings.
- 10.3 Forward planning seminars and a grants award scheme have been announced to assist museum boards in reviewing and developing their forward plans to support improved organisational resilience.
- 10.4 The annual SHARE Museums East Volunteers Awards took place on 8 June 2017. The Awards generated a record 71 nominations, with an excellent response from Norfolk museums. The winner of the Unsung Hero award was Ron Batley from the 100th Bomb Group Memorial Museum at Thorpe Abbots near Diss. Megan Dennis was awarded Highly Commended in the Volunteer Manager award.
- 10.5 The 7th Annual SHARE Museums East conference Facing Change, Moving Forward will be held at the John Bunyan Museum in Bedfordshire on 6th November 2017. The keynote speakers will be Julia Kauffman OBE (Chair, Small Charities Coalition) and Bernard Donoghue (Director, Association of Leading Visitor Attractions).
- 10.6 For more information on NMS' leadership role in museum development in the region and the SHARE scheme visit: <http://sharemuseumseast.org.uk>

11. Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

